

December 2001 Injury Prevention Newsletter

Alaska News & Resources

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National News & Resources

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1. Unalaska Children Get Lessons in Survival. (Anchorage Daily News December 15, 2001, Sarah Burrige, The Dutch Harbor Fisherman) Studies include hypothermia, hiking in rain, and cold-water safety. "While most American third- and fourth-graders are concentrating on the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic, children in Unalaska are getting additional lessons in skills to help them survive in the harsh climate of the Aleutian Islands. Teacher Mary Downs has had her students studying hypothermia and how to dress for the weather, taking them hiking in the rain and learning about how a simple garbage bag could keep them dry and warm. So it was only natural, on an island supported by the fishing industry and surrounded by water that her next lessons focused on cold-water survival skills."

(You can access the full story by visiting www.adn.com <<http://www.adn.com>> and doing a subject search.)

2. Avoid sledding spills. "A 14-year-old girl fractured her collarbone after losing control of her snow tube last January. Two days later, a seven-year-old boy in Michigan suffered a fatal rib injury when his sled slammed into a tree. Sledding is a popular winter activity that causes nearly 40,000 injuries each year, most involving children ages 5 to 14 who rocket downhill on plastic disks and inflatable tubes. How can parents help kids avoid injury? Besides following the general rules (don't allow sledding near trees, telephone poles, or traffic; and make sure your child wears a helmet), it's important to invest in a safe sled." (Good Housekeeping Institute Report, December 2001 - the site lists two types of sleds that passed their safety tests. www.goodhousekeeping.com <<http://www.goodhousekeeping.com>>)

3. Holiday Safety Tips can be found on the CHEMS Injury Surveillance and Prevention website: www.chems.alaska.gov/ems_injury_prevention.htm <http://www.chems.alaska.gov/ems_injury_prevention.htm>

4. The AMA's goal and role in preventing gun-related injury. Dr. Richard Corlin wrote an Opinion column in the December 17, 2001 (vol. 44 no. 47) issue of American Medical News discussing his inaugural address, which called for an acknowledgement of gun violence as a public health crisis. You can access the full column (as well as other interesting medical news) at <<http://www.ama-assn.org/public/journals/amnews/amnews.htm>>.

5. What not to do at a car wreck. Robert Steinback, a columnist at the Miami Herald, has written an attention-grabbing article of his experiences as a witness to an automobile collision. He describes his reactions to the incident, discusses what actions he performed, then lists recommendations for appropriate responses to the situation. He closes by saying "We shouldn't rely on trained emergency personnel alone, because in almost every case, a civilian will be the first one on an emergency scene. In my immediate future: a first-aid case in my car, a refresher CPR course - - and a better appreciation for those who do it every day." The full article is available at

www.miami.com/herald/content/news/local/dade/digdocs/066599.htm
<<http://www.miami.com/herald/content/news/local/dade/digdocs/066599.htm>>

6. Web sites for injury prevention resources

A. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission protects the public from unreasonable risks of injury or death from 15,000 types of consumer products under the agency's jurisdiction. The list of holiday item recalls is getting longer. To report a dangerous product or a product-related injury, call CPSC's hotline at 800-638-2772 or CPSC's teletypewriter at 800-638-8270. Other information about the CPSC is available on the web at: www.cpsc.gov <<http://www.cpsc.gov>>

B. The www.safetylit.org <<http://www.safetylit.org>> website offers weekly abstracts of safety-related articles and reports.

C. The Century Council is promoting an online interactive program designed to educate users on how drinking affects blood alcohol levels, the legal blood alcohol driving limits in each state, and how much users have to drink to exceed those limits. The program factors in weight, gender, number and types of drinks consumed, elapsed time, how quickly the drinks are consumed, and amount of food eaten. Check out the program at www.b4udrink.org <<http://www.b4udrink.org>>

D. There are some good safety materials at www.parlay.com <<http://www.parlay.com>> Be aware that they are copyrighted, so you will need to obtain a license from them in order to use the materials.

7. Product recalls and safety information

A. Toxic tree lights - Bubble tree lights are back; but the Good Housekeeping Institute's December 2001 Safety Report recommends that you not buy them. According to the report, the lights contain methylene chloride, a toxic liquid used in paint removers and pesticides.

B. The FDA has recalled 'mini-cup gel candies' sold under the names of Mother's Pride and NATA. This type of candy poses a serious choking risk; three children have died choking on this kind of jelly candy in the United States, and other countries have reported similar choking deaths. The candy comes in small, sealed plastic cups, the size of individual coffee creamers that contain gelatin. Some also have a chunk of fruit.

A very safe and happy holiday season to all



This newsletter has been compiled by the Section of Community Health & EMS (CHEMS), Alaska Division of Public Health and sent to subscribers of the AK-Prev and AHELP list-serves. It has also been sent as a 'bcc' to others in Alaska including Public Health Centers, SAFE KIDS coalitions, Native Health organizations, and regional EMS Councils and Coordinators who may be interested and active in injury prevention and health promotion. The purpose is to share resources, breaking news, training opportunities, product recalls, and opinions to help prevent injuries to Alaskans. Feedback and contributions are encouraged. Contributions can be directed to Zoann Murphy: zoann_murphy@health.state.ak.us <mailto:zoann_murphy@health.state.ak.us>